

P.S. If you know where Miss E. G. Frothingham  
is, I would like to have you send this to her, when  
you have read it, if you please.

Leicester,  
Sept. 13. 1871.

Dear friend Webb,

I must write you a few lines, to leave by the  
Steam<sup>r</sup>. departing from our shores on the same day (14<sup>th</sup>)  
that M<sup>rs</sup>. May is booked to leave yours. We suppose her  
to be now at y<sup>r</sup>. house, - & of course saying & doing the last  
of her trans-atlantic matters. Our last from her is of date  
Aug. 31<sup>st</sup> at Birm<sup>gham</sup>. - We have sympathized with you  
& Deborah in what we have supposed might be your  
trouble (?), viz. that Dublin sh<sup>d</sup> happen to be in a state of  
partial ferment & disorder just as M<sup>rs</sup>. M. was coming  
to your house. But for the last 4 or 5 days the teleg. has  
b<sup>ro</sup>ut no acct. of any renewal of the disturbances, and I  
pretume there has been none. And we hope the weather, &  
all the circumstances, have been favorable to your  
convenience, as well as to M<sup>rs</sup>. M.'s enjoy<sup>t</sup>, in the time  
of her being with you. Thus far in Sept<sup>r</sup> we have  
been having the most delicious weather, - days warm,  
very warm for season, many of them at 80° & upward;  
but the nights cool, so as to make a little wood-  
fire to sit by quite desirable<sup>\*</sup>. Of course we are  
counting the days before M<sup>rs</sup>. M.'s arrival, which  
we anticipate for Monday 25<sup>th</sup>, tho' once the "Siberia"  
made the passage hither in 10 days - (wh. w<sup>d</sup> bring her here, 24<sup>th</sup>.)

\* But to-day it cleared, & I am preparing for a storm.



We hope she may have reasonably good weather - so as to be able to comprehend that the Atlantic is not always so dreadful as on her ant<sup>d</sup>. passage; but we cannot expect it to be very smooth at this season. Now I wish - on one acct. & for her own sake - that she could have made her visit at Birm<sup>gham</sup> & Dublin one month earlier, & come home with her friends Mr. & Mrs Taylor ~~in~~ in August; and the reason why, is also the principal reason why I am writing you this hurried letter; - wh. I give you, as follows -

Edward received Orders six days ago to get ready immediately & go to the Sandwich Islands on a Government Agency; he sent a teleg. message that it w<sup>d</sup> be impossible for him to go as soon as the orders required. The Department considerately allows him to remain here until Nov. 1<sup>st</sup> or so, but he must take the 11<sup>th</sup> Nov. Steam<sup>r</sup>. from San F. for Honolulu. This is one grand break-up of his plans for the winter, and is a very hard blow for the poor fellow. He had (& we all had) look<sup>d</sup> forward to ~~there~~ a quiet & pleasant winter for him & his new wife in their snug house at ~~the~~ Charleston, - where they would be near Mary's Mother (a widow, & M. her only daughter), & where we all c<sup>d</sup>. see them often. But "the best-laid plans of men & mice", &c. you know! - And now for the



other side. E. feels sure that in this matter the Department has been doing a good thing for him, in the long run, & with the most friendly feeling to him. About a month ago, he was asked by the Officer at the head of one of the Navy bureaux, if he w<sup>d</sup>. like the appointment in question. He said, he should; that there was no other, within the range of any likelihood to get, he would like so much. He was next ask<sup>d</sup>, inasmuch as an appointment to the said office must be made before a great while, if he were willing to surrender a portion of the time to which his present duty at Charlestown would customarily extend (namely to June next) - and he answered he ~~should~~ was willing. He did not enquire, I presume, - at any rate he did not imagine that the appointment must be made so soon, & that he w<sup>d</sup>. be call<sup>d</sup> on to give up almost the whole of his remaining time. But herein is the great advantage, - that, now, he may expect to be able to remain with his wife (if life is spared) for some 3 years to come; whereas, if he held to his present situation at Ch<sup>n</sup>; the term of it <sup>would</sup> ~~will~~ expire in June next, & then he must, as certainly as anything future can be, go to sea for 3 years, & not see his newly-married wife in all that time; - a lot to wh. they both have been looking forward with dread, - indeed, could not bear to look at.



With much love to Deborah. Very affectionately. Yours Saml. May.

Now, at the expense of a very considerable present disappointment & loss, they seem to secure a large future gain. Edw<sup>d</sup>. has seen a good deal of the S. Islands, & likes the climate; & we hope it will prove good for M<sup>r</sup>. It comes hardest on her poor Mother, so suddenly deprived of her only daughter; but she bears it admirably, and says "Children's happiness is my happiness, and I am so glad that E. & M. may not be separated in these first years." Next to Blodgett, I feel it comes hard upon Edward's Mother, who will only a few days to get acquainted with Mary, & to do for her & Edw<sup>d</sup>. what she would wish to do. It will be a great blow to her, I doubt not; & she cannot know of it until she sets foot on shore here, unless Edw<sup>d</sup>. may have thought it best to send a teleg. to Dublin, wh. I don't believe he has done.

This morning Mr. George B. Emerson & Rev. T. J. Mumford of Boston have left my house; - where we have been together, Monday eveg., in looking over papers, reading diary & auto biography & otherwise preparing for the Memoir of S. J. May. And it happened that yesterday (12<sup>th</sup>) - the day when we were all engaged from breakfast until nearly midnight on the work - was S. J. M.'s birthday! This fact was not in our plans, in assigning a day for our meeting, at all. The concurrence seemed to me something wonderful. Mr. Emerson was a classmate of S. J. in College - intimate then, intimate even since. They discovered, that they both were born on the same day, (1797, Sept<sup>r</sup>. So of course Mr. Emerson reached his birthday to yesterday;

I haven't yet been able to get from Alf<sup>d</sup>. Wilkins the reminiscence of S. J. M. you sent him. I hope he may have lost the letter. If I don't get it soon, I shall have to ask you to give it direct to us - whatever it may have been together with anything else that may have occurred to you.

Ade. & Bessie are well. Louisa Mott left us on Monday, after a visit of a fortnight, wh. we enjoyed greatly. is far from well, but Ade thinks better for being on our hills. I & Mrs. May will see Mr. Addey in Cork.

\* but to-day it clouds. I shall be preparing for a storm.

MS. B. 1. 6 v. 11, p. 15